

Sustainability Case Studies



Lillydale Farmstay, Scenic Rim

<http://www.lillydale.com.au/>

Lillydale Farmstay offers fun, farm holidays for families near Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Lillydale Farmstay is nestled in the Scenic Rim, a picturesque corner of South East Queensland (SEQ). The 90 minute drive from Brisbane or the Gold Coast will see you close to Mount Barney National Park and the surrounding towns of Rathdowney, Beaudesert and Boonah.



1. Getting started

Lillydale is an advanced ecotourism business that was looking for new ideas to become more environmentally sustainable. Having made the big steps of planting thousands of trees and purchasing 5 star water and energy rated machines we were stumped as to why our energy usage was still so high so we decided to go back to basics and start again. We checked our carbon footprint online and we were stunned at the result. We had a lot of work to do.

2. Major initiatives

We have increased the veggie patch size
The entire household, including guests, eat vegetarian meals on Friday night
We will have changed the old hot water system to heat pump or gas system within 12 months
We intersperse teleconferences with face to face meetings which cuts down on travel emissions.
We are deciding whether to stay with AAA and retain rating, or lose rating and reduce energy usage by removing televisions and air-conditioning – it's a big decision!

3. Key outcomes

By increasing veggie patch we will help guests become more aware of the food growing process, reduce carbon emissions by driving less and save money on food.
Over 2,000kg of carbon lost simply by eating one vegetarian meal a week.
By changing hot water system we will lower our electricity usage.
By changing face to face meetings with teleconferences we will reduce air and car travelling and also save a lot of time. So far by using teleconferences for one month we have already reduced our carbon use by a further 800kg.
Staff discussions on merits of being with AAA vs environmental benefits and guest needs still ongoing.

4. Major challenges

Our own attitude! We found it really hard to adjust to the idea that it would be better for us not to eat meat (even if it is only one meal a week).

Finding the time to sit down together and create an action plan on the things we can do and the things we will do in the future.

Fighting for teleconferences. All of the participants enjoy the interaction that they have with the other board members and it was hard to get them to agree to phone conferences instead of face to face contact. By highlighting the advantages (no drive time, no air time, no lost baggage, increasing the green status of the different companies) to them it did help them to change their minds.

5. Advice to operators

Before starting make sure that you are willing to make changes to your lifestyle not just your business and keep it simple. There are so many ways that you can lower your carbon output without doing anything to technical. Make sure you've done all of the basic stuff before you go on with anything else.

6. Next steps

Lillydale needs to decide whether to maintain their AAA rating, lower their AAA rating or leave AAA all together. To maintain our rating we are required to have many energy draining appliances in the rooms. If we were to take out the air conditioners, televisions, alarm clocks, hairdryers and other unnecessary appliances our energy use would quickly fall which would be of benefit to us financially and environmentally. We would also like to look into solar power with more detail.

Contact

Pam Hardgrave

Phone: 07 5544 3131

Email: sales@lillydale.com.au